



23 June 2006

Independence Day Safety

1. Two hundred and thirty years ago, fifty-six distinguished gentlemen representing the original thirteen colonies of the United States signed the most important document in our nation's history--the Declaration of Independence. America's citizens continue to celebrate this achievement every 4th of July by paying tribute not only to the birth of our nation, but also to our Servicemembers deployed world-wide who unselfishly guard our time-honored freedoms.
2. As you celebrate our nation's birthday and enjoy the long holiday weekend, everyone must be fully engaged in preventing off-duty accidents, injuries and deaths. We must meet "Under the Oak Tree" with our Servicemembers and reaffirm our commitment to protecting our most valuable asset---our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Civilian Employees, and Family Members.
3. The Independence Day weekend is a great chance for USFK personnel to travel and participate in various activities around the Korean peninsula. Whether your plans include traveling, having a BBQ picnic or participating in on-post activities, identify the hazards you might confront, mitigate the risks, and ensure that you can execute the activities safely.
4. Primary risks this time of year are alcohol abuse, fatigue, dehydration, over confidence in our abilities, and under estimating summer weather hazards. Use the appropriate protective equipment for the activities you're engaged in and check each other's wellness during vigorous activities. Leaders must be aggressive in preventing alcohol abuse and criminal acts of violence such as sexual assaults.
5. Leaders, your involvement is essential to keeping our USFK Family safe. Ensure your first line supervisors meet with each of their personnel "Under the Oak Tree", discuss their holiday plans and establish a verbal "behavior contract." These meetings are an opportunity for you to have a dialogue with your personnel and establish parameters for their off-duty activities and behavior. Follow the buddy system and ensure our curfew hours are enforced.
6. Commanders' and leaders' commitment to the well-being of our people resulted in no loss of life during the last holiday period. Let "no loss of life" be the end state for this upcoming holiday weekend as well. With engaged leadership and commitment to positively impacting risky behavior by our subordinates, we will not suffer needless tragedies and loss of life.
7. Have a great National Birthday celebration, and please be safe. We Go Together!

B. B. BELL
General, US Army
Commander

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